

Biosecurity Tips for Exhibiting Swine

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Introduction

The Animal Health Branch (AHB) recommends that swine exhibits, when possible, be terminal events. Anytime animals from different sources have direct animal-to-animal contact, there is a risk they may transmit diseases to each other and if returned home carry the diseases back to their herd mates and home premises. Contaminated people, animal housing and bedding, feeding and grooming equipment, transportation vehicles, or other objects that come in contact with animals or their bodily fluids or excretions may indirectly transmit diseases. Indirect transmission of disease may also occur through airborne spread by insects, such as flies, aerosols and dust. Potential routes of direct and indirect disease transmission should be considered when developing a biosecurity plan for exhibiting swine. If the swine exhibition is not a terminal event, strict biosecurity guidelines are recommended to minimize the likelihood of disease transmission.

Ideally, the exhibition of swine breeding stock should be a separate event from a market swine exhibit. If exhibitions include both classes of swine, disease transmission can be minimized if the breeding animals are removed from the premises before market animals arrive. If both classes of swine are present on the premises at the same time, special emphasis should be placed on enhanced biosecurity.

Biosecurity Before the Exhibit

Prior to the fair or exhibition, procedures such as blood sample collection, weighing animals, and ear tagging for identification should be performed without the commingling of swine from different premises. Two effective methods to complete tasks without commingling are:

Option 1: Organize community days with traveling "procedure crews" performing the work on the animals to be shown at their home premises.

Option 2: Transport show animals to a centralized procedure location maintaining separation of animals from different facilities.

With use of either method, biosecurity should be strictly enforced to minimize disease transmission between premises and groups of animals. Specific biosecurity recommendations for performing pre-fair procedures with these options include:

- ◆ Swine should remain at their home facility or remain in their transport trailers if brought to a centralized location.
- ◆ Between groups of animals from different facilities, clean all surfaces contacting animals and disinfect surfaces with Nolvasan[®], Clorox[®] solution, One Stroke Environ[®], or comparable anti-viral, anti-bacterial disinfectant mixed and used according to manufacturer directions.
- ◆ Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling animals and between handling groups of animals from different facilities.
- ◆ Clean and disinfect rubber footwear between facilities or trailers to decrease the risk of cross contamination.
- ◆ Use disposable coveralls to decrease the risk of indirect disease; remove and discard after contact with each group of animals. If cloth coveralls are worn, change between facilities or trailers.
- ◆ Clean and disinfect equipment (scales, hog snares, blood collection equipment, etc.) between facilities or between handling pigs in trailers from different facilities.
- ◆ Remove your boots and coveralls before entering your vehicle, place used coveralls in a plastic bag, and thoroughly wash your hands to avoid contamination of the vehicle.

Biosecurity at the Exhibit

At an exhibition, every effort should be made to provide proper ventilation and as much distance between groups of animals as possible. Physical separation minimizes aerosol transmission of disease agents and prevents direct animal-to-animal contact. The level of biosecurity provided increases as the distance between animals increases. Breeding swine from different premises exhibited at shows should be kept separated. A vacant pen between animals from different facilities is ideal. Solid paneling, at least three feet high, provides some biosecurity; open panels and fencing that allow animal-to-animal contact provide little, if any, biosecurity. Avoid commingling of animals at the wash rack and in transit to and from pens. The show ring is the only place commingling of animals from different premises should occur. Aisles between pens should be kept clean and any bedding, urine, or manure should be removed promptly.

People can transmit disease agents indirectly between groups of swine. To minimize the risk of indirect transmission the following precautions are recommended:

- ◆ Avoid sharing feeding and watering equipment and animal care supplies with other exhibitors, unless you thoroughly clean and disinfect between use.
- ◆ Avoid contacting swine or entering the pens of animals from other premises. If contacting swine from different premises, take the following precautions before and after contact:
 - Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water
 - Thoroughly clean and disinfect your rubber boots
 - Change your protective coveralls.

Your face, hair, and eyeglasses may be contaminated by inadvertently contacting them while handling animals. To avoid contamination, tie back long hair, wear a disposable head cover and make sure eyeglasses fit snugly. If contaminated, these areas should be washed with soap and water.

General Biosecurity Precautions

General biosecurity precautions should be practiced at the home facility and enhanced while at exhibitions:

- ◆ Transport exhibition animals in your own vehicle. Avoid pick up or delivery of swine from other facilities en route to or from the exhibition.
- ◆ Maintain hygiene of the animal housing area and promptly remove soiled bedding.
- ◆ Isolate sick animals from the group and initiate appropriate treatment. To prevent disease transmission, equipment and tools used in the care of sick animals should not be used for care of other animals unless cleaned and disinfected between use. If animals become ill at the exhibit, consult your veterinarian prior to transporting them back to the home premises. The health of your entire herd is at risk when returning a sick animal to the home premises. If returning home, strict quarantine of the affected animal is recommended.
- ◆ Quarantine and observe exhibition animals returned to the home premises for at least 60 days. Animals may have been exposed to disease during the exhibition and may demonstrate illness after their return. Consult your veterinarian on any recommended testing of exhibition animals prior to release from quarantine and reunion with the home herd.

For additional swine biosecurity information visit CDFA AHB Fact Sheet, Swine Biosecurity, August 2007 at:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/pdfs/swinebio.pdf>

or the National Pork Board Web site at:

<http://www.pork.org/PorkScience/SWineHealth/Factsheets.aspx>

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